bly have raised such questions and in consequence their thinking and acting have shown a religious tinge. Moreover, Confucius as we have again and again said, set great store by the ceremonial, part of it unmistakably religious, which had come down from the past. The Confucian school, accordingly, has been a bulwark of the religious rites which are supposed to have originated in the Chou dynasty or earlier and of certain others which have developed from or are akin to them. Confucianism, therefore, can certainly be said tocontain religious features, even though it includes other elements. ^

It is the religious rites and beliefs preserved or nourished by Confucianism with which we are here chiefly concerned and not the political and social doctrines—for these have been or will be considered elsewhere. Through the centuries Confucian scholars have differed on the question of the personality of *ffien* and the existence of spirits, but most of them have agreed/(that the universe favors righteousness in man and all would maintain, religious ritesVUEven. though £ome, like Hsiin Tzu, declared that tjiese rites coul((J/ not alter the course of nature, they contended that they were valuable as a me^ns of educating the people, and so as a form of social control, v

It is probable that even without the influence of the Confucian school the state would have supported some kind of religion. Most ancient and many modern governments have done so. Had it not been for Confucianism, however, that religion would probably have been very different from what it was. For instance, it might have been Buddhism or Taoism. It seems to have been due chiefly to Confucianism that the Imperial Government sought to maintain the religious ritual of antiquity which the

Sage had endorsed. The government also recognized divinities and permitted or actually supported ceremonies which Confucius had never known but which were believed to be consistent with his teaching. It must be noted, indeed, that the state cult which is often called Confucianism and in which ceremonies in honor of Confucius and his disciples were accorded an important part, had a long and varied history. Some of this has been hinted at earlier. The resulting product under the later Ch'ing Emperors was a composite of many influences and movements and a large proportion of it would probably have seemed to Confucius and his immediate dis-